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## AN AUGUR PREMIERE

We are most pleased to be the first to publish an important paper, MAJOR FINANCIAL ECHOES IN THE PAULINE LETTERS, by Stan Clute. Because of its length, the concluding portion will be featured in next month's AUGUR. Stan, one of a strong contingent of Biblical Numismatic Society members in Canada, is active in the Ancient Coin Society of Canada and is a regular columnist for the Canadian Coin News. Active in ancient numismatics for about ten years, Stan's main interest is the history and numismatics of the Roman world under the Julio-Claudian dynasty.

Mel Wacks NLG
Editor

ERRATA

In the July AUGUR the inscription on the second line of the Coin of the Month article should read ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ. The caption on page 23 should be "Unique Quarter Shekel dated 'Year Four'."

And Ira Goldberg has just informed us that there is strong evidence that none of the known Year 4 Half Shekels are genuine!

"Year Three" (68/69 A.D.) Jewish Shekel

## Coin of the Month

### THE JEWISH SHEKEL

The Jewish Shekel has been the center of debate for hundreds of years. They have been attributed to the times of Simon Maccabaeus (Bayer, NUMIS HABRAEO-SAMARITANIS, 1781), Alexander the Great (De Saulcy, RECHERCHES SUR LA NUMISMATIQUE JUDAIQUE, 1854), and the FIRST REVOLT (Ewald, NACH RICHTEN DER KON, 1855). It is now commonly accepted that the Jewish Shekels were minted during the First Revolt, but a few dissenters still hold out for other theories.

The design on both sides of the Shekels have been the subject of speculation too. The three stemmed plant on the reverse has alternately been identified as lillies, Aaron's budding rod, pomegranates and the tongue twisting Zizyphus spina-christi (a thorn bush). The pomegranate is the accepted symbology. Pomegranates had appeared previously on the bronze coins of the Hasmonean Kings of Judaea (between two cornucopiae) and on coins of Herod the Great. Pomegranates were one of the seven celebrated products of Judaea, "A land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey" (Deut. 8:8). Pomegranates were also a popular decorating motif in the Temple and on the sacred vestment of the High Priest. Romanoff (JEWISH SYMBOLS ON ANCIENT JEWISH COINS) indicates that the pomegranate symbol "early assumed the meaning of blessing and fertility. It also connoted piety, good deeds, and knowledge."

The object on the obverse would appear to be a jeweled chalice, but scholars have shown little inclination to come to a consensus. Early scholars tended to interpret this vessel as the pot of manna (bread from heaven), "Gather of it every man according to his eating, an omer for every man" (Exodus 16:16). According to the Aggadah (commentaries), when the destruction of the First Temple was imminent, the pot of manna was concealed along with the Ark and the sacred oil. It is supposed that in the messianic age

the prophet of Elijah would restore these hidden holy objects. If this is the symbol on the Shekel, perhaps it was in the hope that a victorious end to the revolt would lead to the long awaited messianic period.

Dr. Paul Romanoff indicates that the pearled rim of the vessel would have made drinking almost impossible; he further writes that "the drinking of wine in the Temple was forbidden" (refer to Jeremiah 35) and doubts that this vessel was meant to hold sacrificial (animal's) blood. Rather, Romanoff believes the design "signifies the golden vessel that contained the Omer and was used on the second day of Passover when a measure of barley, a tenth of an ephaph, equal to one and a half pints of fine flour, was offered to the Temple as the first-fruits of the field."

Romanoff's arguments aside, Professor Bruno Kisch (SHEKEL MEDALS AND FALSE SHEKELS, 1941) agrees with Cavedoni (BIBLISCHE NUMISMATIC, 1855) that the Shekel-vessel represents a sacrificial cup used in the Temple. Such a cup appears on the table of shewbread brought by Titus to Rome, and depicted on the relief of the Arch of Titus.

Wolf Wirgin (THE HISTORY OF COINS AND SYMBOLS IN ANCIENT ISRAEL, 1958) espouses the Temple laver theory: "And the Lord spoke unto Moses, saying: 'Thou shalt also make a laver of brass, and the base thereof of brass, whereat to wash; and thou shalt put it between the tent of meeting (tabernacle) and the altar, and thou shalt put water therein. And Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet thereat" (Exodus 30:17-19).

Wirgin believes the "pearls" around the rim of the Shekel-vessel may represent the "twelve stop-cocks made by Ben Katin for the laver, which before had but two" (Talmud).

Finally, the late Leo Kadman (1960) evaluated all of the aforementioned theories, found them wanting and developed his own. Kadman discarded the pot of manna theory because it could not have survived the destruction of the first Temple and it had a cover whereas the Shekel-vessel is uncovered. He rejects the omer theory because "the vessel represented on the Shekels is certainly not fit for the offering of barley, wheat and fruits." As for the laver and its twelve water taps made by Ben-Katin, this is found impossible both due to its physical appearance and chronologically. Rather, Kadman speculates that the chalice symbolized the sacrificial wine-libation, concluding that the coin-symbol "must have had deep spiritual meaning which appears in such Scriptural phrases as 'cup of divination' (Genesis 44:5), 'cup of consolation' (Jeremiah 16:7) and 'cup of salvation' (Psalms 116:13)."

The superb "Year 3" (68/69 A.D.) Shekel shown in the accompanying slide is from the collection of Museum Haaretz, Tel-Aviv. This is the variety with a broad shallow body and nine "pearls."

(Mel Wacks)

**Silver stater of Tarsus, home of Paul, in the time of Alexander the Great. Baaltars is shown seated on a throne, and the goddess Athena is featured.**

# MAJOR FINANCIAL ECHOES IN THE PAULINE LETTERS

## by Stanley Clute

A paper presented March 19, 1977 at the Ancient Coin Society Symposium held at the University of Toronto. Printed by permission of the Ancient Coin Society (of Canada), P.O. Box 794, Station "F", Toronto, Ontario M4Y 2N7 Canada.

In this paper, the author will attempt to outline and reconcile the major financial themes echoed in the letters of Paul the Apostle. In the course of this paper, a possible explanation will be suggested for Paul's refusal to accept payment for his teaching from any of his Gentile Christian churches except that in Philippi. His great collection for the Jerusalem poor will be discussed, as will a passage which appears superficially to resemble certain aspects of the 'tribute penny' passages in the Synoptic Gospels. The paper will not deal with specific coins or coin issues but, rather, with much more general concepts of Paul's relationship to money and its uses.

**Gold stater of Philippi, Macedonia, 358-350 B.C., with Hercules and tripod.**

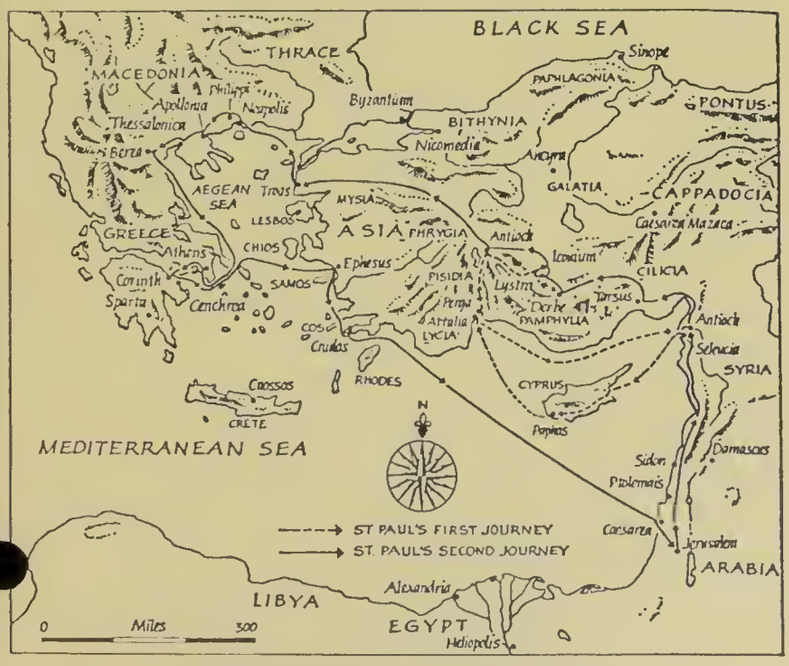
Of primary interest is Paul's claim to support by the local churches and his refusal to act upon it, along with his acceptance of support from the Philippian congregation, and the apparent ambiguity of his attitude. I Corinthians 9: 7-18 defines Paul's basis for a claim to support:

> "Or are Barnabas and I alone bound to work for our living? Did you ever hear of a man serving in the army at his own expense? or planting a vineyard without eating the fruit of it? or tending a flock without using its milk? Do not suppose that I rely on these human analogies, for the Law says the same; in the Law of Moses we read, 'You shall not muzzle a threshing ox'. Do you suppose God's concern is with oxen? Or is this reference clearly to ourselves? Of course it refers to us, in the sense that the ploughman should plow and the thresher thresh in the hope of getting some of the produce. If we have sown a spiritual crop for you, is it too much to expect from you a material harvest? If you allow others these rights, have we not a stronger claim?
>
> "But I have availed myself of no such right. On the contrary, I put up with all that comes my way rather than offer any hindrance to the Gospel of Christ. You know (do you not) that those who perform the temple service eat the temple offerings, and those who wait upon the altar claim their share of the sacrifice. In the same way, the Lord gave instructions that those who preach the Gospel should earn their living by the Gospel.

But I have never taken advantage of any such right, nor do I intend to claim it in this letter. I had rather die! No one shall make my boast an empty boast. Even if I preach the Gospel, I can claim no credit for it; I cannot help myself; it would be misery to me not to preach. If I did it of my own choice, I should be earning my pay; but since I do it apart from my own choice, I am simply discharging a trust. Then what is my pay? The satisfaction of preaching the Gospel without expense to anyone; in other words, of waiving the rights which my preaching gives me."

This refusal of his right to be supported by the congregation recurs in 2 Cor. 11: 7-10 and 12: 13-14, as well as in 2 Thessalonians 3: 8-10, and all deserve an examination. First, however, a study should be conducted of I Cor. 9: 7-18, which Paul uses to demonstrate the idea of Christian freedom. Gunther Bornkamm*1* suggests that Paul is here thinking of freedom as a renunciation of one's right, based upon the "fateful constraint of the Gospel" whose content overrides Paul's own judgement.

Tied in with the question of freedom is one of Paul's own motivation: we do not know for certain whether his motive for refusing to claim support has been called into question yet, but according to Peter Richardson, in a manuscript soon to be published, "Am I Not Free? An Introduction to Paul's Theology", his use of freedom has been. I Cor. is actually Paul's second letter to Corinth, the first one being lost to us. It may be that after the writing of that first letter but before the composition of I Cor., someone has accused Paul of planning to take some of the proposed Jerusalem collection (about which more will be said later) for himself. If we accept Calvin Roetzel's suggestion*2* that the Corinthian church in writing to Paul mentioned the *possibility* of Paul's motives in raising the collection being called into question, then we might assume that insinuations had been made already and we can see why Paul wished to establish his motive for his financial independence. But perhaps Roetzel is overemphasizing this alleged questioning of Paul's motives: Paul may have known of the question orally, or perhaps it was merely a hint in the letter he received from Corinth—for if they had raised the matter deliberately, it should be dealt with deliberately by Paul.




St. Paul's First and Second Journeys

Paul lived in an age when itinerant ministers and lecturers were supported by the people they taught, and Paul did not wish to be regarded as one of these "professional talkers."

Paul gives an off-the-cuff answer as a possible basis for claiming support from his congregation; the analogy of a workman being paid for his job (I Cor. 9:7-8), "Did you ever hear of a man serving in the army at his own expense?" *et cetera*. But Paul rejects this human analogy as the basis of his claim for support, for his apostleship cannot rest, in any way, upon human foundations if it is to be valid and credible. He then cites the Jewish Law as an authority for the claim (9:9-10). But some might claim that, if the coming of Jesus has discharged mankind from the Law (as Paul asserts elsewhere), Paul cannot then claim the Law as his source.

It is very doubtful that Paul has not, by this point, worked out his own concept of the place of the Law. It may be that, as in other places, he is simply using scriptures as his base, not Law *qua* Law. Or he may fall into its use especially when he is embarassed. He apparently uses it here to establish a form of continuity of his right (to support) from Law to Christ.

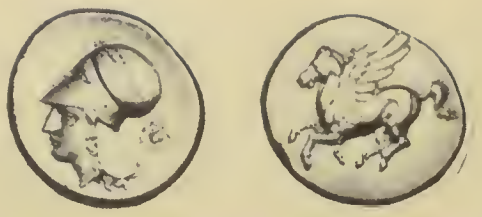
The Apostle goes on to establish the word of the Lord as his immediate authority to make the claim (I Cor. 9:14). It is possible that Paul, in this way, is also asserting the superiority of his claim to support over the claims of those itinerant ministers and lecturers mentioned above, who might claim the Law, or even the simple right of payment for work done, as their authority for demanding support.

Paul goes on to relinquish this right in I Cor. 9:15-18, in a manner which leaves little doubt that he is not referring solely to Corinth, but to other congregations as well. The church at Philippi, as we shall see, was to be the sole exception. Before we can attempt to resolve the apparent conflict between Paul's attitude in I Corinthians and his behaviour in Philippians, it is perhaps advisable to take a closer look at the situation which arises in Philippians. Summed up briefly, the problem is that, for some reason, Paul was willing to accept financial help from the Philippian congregation, despite his protestations in I Corinthians. This incident, noted quite clearly in Phil. 4:15-20, is the only case of the acceptance of a gift in the Pauline letters.

Bornkamm has suggested*3* that Paul's thought always extends outside the individual congregation to the district or country. In other words, each church which Paul founded represents to him an entire district. If Philippi indeed represents for Paul *all* the congregations of Macedonia, we can now begin to understand his reference in 2 Cor. 11:8 and 12:13, wherein he speaks of receiving payment from other congregations, in the plural, after having received a gift from Philippi. One might speculate conversely, that the gift from Philippi was actually a composite gift from all or many of the congregations of Macedonia channeled, perhaps, through Philippi; but Phil. 4:15 seems to rule out this possibility. It reads:

"As you know yourselves, Philippians, in the early days of mission, when I set out from Macedonia, you alone of all our congregations were my partners in payments and receipts."

Paul apparently regards all his congregations as his partners, while also looking upon them much as a father regards his children. However, it remains likely that he was closer to the Philippian church for some reason. It is stated explicitly in the above quotation that he regarded the Philippians as his *only* partners in money matters.



**Silver stater of Corinth, 338-300 B.C., with Pegasus and Athena.**

Supposing that I Corinthians was written before Philippians, and that Philippians in turn was written before the two letters which comprise 2 Corinthians, we may begin to see the outline of a progression of thought.

> In 2 Cor. 11:8-9, Paul refers to a gift from some Macedonians: "It is true that I took toll of other congregations, accepting support from them to serve you. Then, while I was with you, if I ran short, I sponged on no-one; anything I needed was fully met by our friends who came from Macedonia; I made it a rule, as I always shall, never to be a burden to you."

How are we to reconcile this? At the time Paul thanked the Philippians for their gift he was evidently in prison somewhere. Yet in 2 Corinthians 11:8-9, he speaks of receiving a gift of a financial nature from some visitors from Macedonia, while he was in Corinth. If we view this first gift as being received during Paul's first visit to Corinth, A.D. 50-52 or thereabouts, we are faced with the apparent contradiction of his statement in I Cor. 9:15, that he had not (at that time) taken advantage of his right to claim support. The writer does not believe that there is any real contradiction here and now proposes to provide a possible solution, at least in part, to the puzzle.

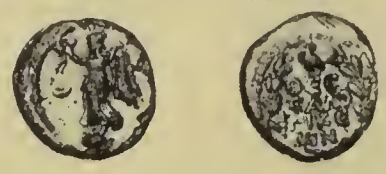
In Phil. 4:15, Paul refers to the Philippians' being, alone of all his congregations, his partners in payments and receipts *in the early days of his mission*, not just through the "new" gift they have sent to him in his prison:

> ". . . in the early days of my mission, when I set out from Macedonia . . ."

If we rule out the possibility of Philippians having been written from Corinth, then the gift for which he thanks the Philippians could not have been received by him in that place. On the strength of Phil. 4:15 and the above reasoning, it is hereby suggested that Paul received a minimum of two gifts from the Philippian church, the second gift being delivered to him in prison somewhere, possibly in Ephesus, about A.D. 55. It is the gift for which he expresses thanks in Phil. 4:15. At the same time he recalls their earlier gift which *did* reach him in Corinth. Paul's Second Missionary Journey took him to Asia Minor, Macedonia and Greece about the years A.D. 49 to 50. About A.D. 50 to 52 he was in Corinth and I believe that it was then that the first gift of money was delivered to him. Paul's reference to "our friends from Macedonia" evidently refers to the Philippian bearers of the gift.

Werner Kummel stipulates two early gifts, one of which Paul received in Thessalonica and again, later in Corinth, the one which this writer has just postulated; Accorcing to Kummel, the letter to the Philippians was written after Paul had received yet a third gift of money from them.[4] He believes that it was written during Paul's stay either at Ephesus or Caesarea.[5] Kummel appears to be building upon the theory, mentioned by Bornhamm,[6] that we have in Philippians two or three parts of letters—perhaps two of which were related to gifts from Philippi. However, this view is nothing more than a theory.

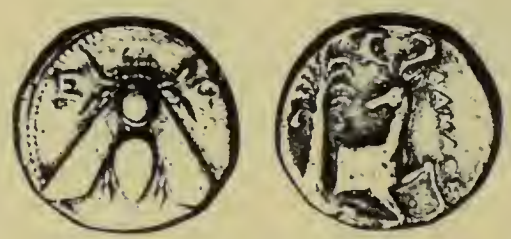
If, then, Paul received one or more gifts from Philippi before he wrote I Corinthians, about A.D. 54 or 55,[7] how can he claim that he has not taken advantage of any of the right to claim support from his preaching? In the opinion of the writer, he can do this simply because he does not consider the acceptance of an unsolicited gift from a congregation other than the one to which he was preaching at the time to be the same as actively claiming support in payment of his preaching. In a sense, Paul is content to take a passive role in the receipt of such a gift; but he will not take an aggressive part in asking for support.



**Bronze of Thessalonica, Imperial times, 1st Century B.C.**

Nor were the Corinthians an exceptional case, for in 2 Thessalonians 3:8-10 Paul tells his congregation in Thessalonica:

> "We were no idlers among you; . . . we toiled and drudged, we worked for a living night and day, rather than be a burden to any of you—not because we have not the right to maintenance, but to set an example for you to imitate."



**Tetradrachm of Ephesus, 387-295 B.C., featuring a bee and stag.**

The same idea is reflected in Acts 20:33-35, in the account of Paul's speech to the Ephesian elders. Paul says, in part:

> "I have not wanted anyone's money or clothes for myself; you all know that these hands of mine earned enough for the needs of myself and my companions."

While the authenticity of the speech attributed to Paul may be open to some doubt, the actual fact of his not accepting money from the Ephesians may equally well be based upon fairly sound tradition.

*(To be concluded next month)*

FOOTNOTES

1. Gunter Bornkamm, *Paul* (New York, 1971), p. 174
2. Calvin J. Roetzel, *The Letters of Paul* (Atlanta, 1975), p. 46
3. Bornkahh, op. cit., pp. 53-54
4. Werner Kummel, *Introduction to the New Testament* (Nashville, 1975), pp. 322-323
5. Ibid., pp. 324-332
6. Bornkamm, op. cit., pp. 246-247
7. Kummel, op. cit., pp. 278-279, gives this date.